APPENDIX A

RECOMMENDED FOR FULL-TEXT PUBLICATION
Pursuant to Sixth Circuit Rule 24

Nos. 92-1702/1840
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *Plaintiff-Appellee,*	)	
v.	)	ON APPEAL from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan
ALEX DANDY, *Defendant-Appellant.*	)	

Decided and Filed June 7, 1993

Before: MILBURN and RYAN, Circuit Judges; and COFFIN, Senior Circuit Judge. *

MILBURN, Circuit Judge. Defendant Alex Dandy appeals from the judgment of the district court dated May 22, 1992, on his convictions on ten counts of tax offenses, mail fraud, bankruptcy fraud, and obstruction of justice, all resulting from the jury's finding him guilty. He also appeals

* Honorable Frank M. Coffin, Senior Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, sitting by designation.

from the district court's "Corrected Judgment" entered on June 29, 1992, which eliminated an ambiguity in the judgment concerning his parole eligibility date. On appeal, defendant raises the following issues: (1) whether the trial judge erred in ruling that the judge's acquaintance with a government witness did not require his recusal, (2) whether the district court's limitations on cross-examination and its admission of certain evidence denied defendant his Sixth Amendment right to confront witnesses against him, (3) whether prosecutorial misconduct deprived defendant of a fair trial, (4) whether the district court's questioning of witnesses and commenting on the evidence deprived defendant of a fair trial, (5) whether Counts 1 and 2 of the indictment alleging tax evasion are barred by the statute of limitations, (6) whether Count 8 properly charged a violation of the mail fraud statute, (7) whether Count 9 properly charged a violation of the mail fraud statute, (8) whether the district court committed reversible error in refusing to instruct the jury that repayment is a factor to be considered in determining whether a particular transaction is a loan, and (9) whether the district court lacked jurisdiction to enter its corrected judgment. We affirm in part, vacate in part, and remand.

I.

A.

Defendant Alex Dandy purchased and controlled Hamady Brothers Food Markets, Inc. ("Hamady") through a holding company owned by his family trust. Dandy assumed control of Hamady's business in 1981.

McDonald Dairy was Hamady's dairy supplier, and it followed the common industry practice of paying rebates to its customers based on the volume of their purchases. Beginning

in late 1981, Dandy directed Hamady's accounting department to cash the rebate checks but to account for them as "gift certificates" issued to "Alex Dandy" rather than as rebates earned by Hamady. Dandy then endorsed each gift certificate and directed the accounting department to apply them as credits to his personal loan account with Hamady, thereby reducing the amount he owed. From 1982 to 1984, Dandy diverted more than $1 million in McDonald Dairy rebates through this gift certificate scheme. He also received small amounts from other wholesalers supplying goods to Hamady. He did not report any of this money on his personal income tax returns for 1982 through 1984.

During this same period, defendant also demanded that McDonald Dairy pay numerous bills he had incurred for items such as airline tickets, televisions, and limousine service. McDonald Dairy paid the bills in order to avoid losing its business to Hamady. Other suppliers also agreed to make such payments at Dandy's direction.

In one scheme, a bank account was opened by defendant's friend, Father Basil Kalekas, under the auspices of the "St. George Orthodox Church Pastor's Charitable Fund." Nearly all the money deposited to this fund was paid under Dandy's direction by Hamady's suppliers or by Hamady itself. About 80 percent of the money was then withdrawn as cash and given to defendant. Father Kalekas paid some small personal bills for charitable expenses from the fund, but all checks in the amount of $500 or more were paid at Dandy's direction to or on behalf of himself or his friends for their personal use. When Father Kalekas died, defendant demanded and received the remaining $27,000 in the fund from Kalekas' widow. During the years 1982 through 1984 and 1986, Dandy received about $375,000 in such third-party payments,

including $157,500 paid to the Pastor's Charitable Fund which Dandy never declared on his personal income tax returns.

Also during late 1981, Dandy began to obtain kickbacks from another Hamady supplier, M & B Distributors ("M & B"). He told M & B to raise the markup M & B charged Hamady by one-half percent and to use the resulting money to pay a salary to Dandy's son-in-law, David Kirdassi. Kirdassi never did any work whatsoever for M & B but received $38,400 yearly from 1982 through 1985 and an additional $6,400 in early 1986. None of these kickbacks were reported on Dandy's income tax returns.

On January 24, 1985, an Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") agent issued a summons to McDonald Dairy for records of rebate moneys it had paid to Hamady "or any officer" of Hamady. Defendant sought to cover up his gift certificate scheme by hiring new accountants, signing a note to pay back Hamady for the rebate moneys he had diverted to his account, and directing Hamady to file amended income tax returns declaring that the moneys were corporate income.

In November 1985, a second IRS subpoena was served on McDonald Dairy for records of rebate moneys paid during 1980, 1984, and 1985. Again, defendant directed McDonald Dairy to give the IRS only those checks payable to "Hamady Brothers Food Markets" and to withhold all checks which represented payments directly or indirectly to himself.

In March 1986, Dandy purchased options to buy all the common stock of Nu-Trax, Inc., d/b/a "Chatham Super Markets ("Chatham/Nu-Trax"). He also acquired proxies to vote all of the Chatham/Nu-Trax stock, gaining complete and exclusive control over the corporation. Using his control, defendant Dandy caused Chatham/Nu-Trax to greatly increase

its purchases from certain suppliers whom defendant directed to inflate their prices in order to pay for such things as a sham salary to his son-in-law and kickbacks to defendant's solely owned corporations. ADI International and Michigan Milk Movers, Inc. The sham salary and kickbacks were for "consulting fees" even though these entities provided no services whatsoever for anyone. The suppliers involved in the schemes included M & B Distributors, McDonald Dairy, and London's Farm Dairy ("London's") and the schemes involved several hundred thousand dollars.

Defendant Dandy also diverted numerous Chatham/Nu-Trax assets to himself causing Chatham/Nu-Trax to sell tractors, trailers, and other equipment to its suppliers at very low prices. He then directed the suppliers to pay the remaining value of this equipment to his wholly-owned corporation, ADI International, as "consulting fees," even though ADI International provided no consulting services. He also directed Chatham/Nu-Trax to pay ADI International over $275,000 in bogus "consulting fees." By 1986, it was clear that bankruptcy was inevitable for Chatham/Nu-Trax. Defendant then sold his worthless option on Chatham/Nu-Trax's remaining stock back to Chatham/Nu-Trax, forcing it to pay him cash and transfer real estate worth over $7 million. However, he kept his proxy for exactly one year and one day in order to prevent Chatham/Nu-Trax from declaring bankruptcy during the one-year period within which his option sale could be rescinded as an avoidable transfer under bankruptcy law. Chatham/Nu-Trax and Hamady declared bankruptcy in 1987.

Dandy then declared on his 1986 income tax returns the $7 million he had received for the sale of the option as a capital gain, thereby reducing the tax declared. However, he omitted from the return income he had received in the form of

kickbacks, payments by suppliers for personal services, and sham salaries paid to his son-in-law and his son's girl friend.

B.

On December 14, 1990, an indictment was returned charging defendant Dandy with tax evasion, willfully filing false returns, mail fraud, and bankruptcy fraud. On April 12, 1991, the grand jury returned a superseding indictment charging defendant in Counts 1 through 3 with tax evasion for the years 1982 through 1984 in violation of 26 U.S.C. § 7201; willfully filing false amended returns for 1982, 1983, and 1986 in Counts 4, 5 and 11 in violation of 26 U.S.C. § 7206(1); obstructing an IRS audit in Count 6 in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1505; mail fraud in Counts 7 through 9 in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1341; and bankruptcy fraud in Count 10 in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 152 and 2(b). Trial began on September 19, 1991, and concluded on November 20, 1991. The jury returned a verdict of guilty on all counts except Count 7 which had been dismissed by the district court. The district court sentenced defendant to a total of twenty-three years' imprisonment on May 22, 1992, and entered judgment on June 3, 1992. A timely appeal followed. On June 29, 1992, the district court entered a "Corrected Judgment." A timely appeal again followed.

II.

A.

Defendant Dandy argues that District Judge Cleland should have recused himself pursuant to Dandy's motion under 28 U.S.C. § 455(a) because of Judge Cleland's acquaintance with Douglas Mowat, President of London's Farm Dairy, and with certain members of the London family. We review a

district court's refusal to grant a motion for recusal for abuse of discretion. *Easley v. Univ. of Michigan Bd. of Regents*, 906 F.2d 1143, 1146 (6th Cir. 1990), *cert. denied*, 111 S. Ct. 1414 (1991).

Section 455(a) states that

> any justice, judge, or magistrate of the United States shall disqualify himself in any proceeding in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned.

First in chambers and then on the record on May 19, 1991, Judge Cleland informed the parties of his acquaintance with Mowat and the London family. He explained that he had a casual acquaintanceship with Douglas Mowat, an executive of London's, in that he had seen him at community functions, dinners, and fundraisers over the years. However, Judge Cleland stated he had not seen Mowat in over two years, had never been to Mowat's home, and Mowat had never been to his home.

Judge Cleland also stated he had been acquainted with the London family for close to thirty years and that a senior member of the London family, who is no longer associated with London's Farm Dairy, was an "across the street neighbor" when Judge Cleland was in college and law school. He also stated that while he was a prosecuting attorney for St. Clair County, Michigan, Mr. Mowat and "others from the London organization" may have contributed $10 to $20 apiece to his campaign. J.A. 698-700.

A district court judge must recuse himself where "a reasonable person with knowledge of all the facts would conclude that the judge's impartiality might reasonably be

questioned. This standard is *objective* and is not based 'on the subjective view of a party.'" *United States v. Nelson*, 922 F.2d 311, 319 (6th Cir. 1990)(citations omitted; emphasis in original), *cert. denied*, 111 S. Ct. 1635 (1991). Where the question is close, the judge must recuse himself. *Roberts v. Bailar*, 625 F.2d 125, 129 (6th Cir. 1980).

Defendant has sought to characterize Judge Cleland's relationship with the London family as a lifetime friendship. However, Judge Cleland's disclosure reveals that his relationship with the London family and with Douglas Mowat is merely that of an acquaintance, not an intimate, personal relationship or a relationship in which Judge Cleland would be obligated to the London family or to Mowat. *Cf. In re Faulkner*, 856 F.2d 716, 721 (5th Cir. 1988). In this case, Judge Cleland was not called upon to evaluate the credibility of Mowat because defendant Dandy was tried by a jury. Furthermore, Mowat was simply one of many government witnesses and did not have a personal stake in the outcome which might have influenced Judge Cleland. [1] *Cf. Hadler v. Union Bank and Trust Co. of Greensburg*, 765 F. Supp. 976, 979 (S.D. Ind. 1991).

Finally, defendant argues that London's was considered by Judge Cleland to be a victim of defendant's crime and that because of his relationship with the London family there is an appearance of partiality in favor of one of the executive officers of London's. Defendant refers to a statement that Judge Cleland made at sentencing in which he said that defendant had "financially seduced merchants." J.A. 764. It is not at all clear from the record that Judge Cleland was referring to London's. Nevertheless, even if he were, the

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[1] The government in its brief states that Mowat was one of 56 witnesses.

London Dairy Farm was not a victim in the sense that it suffered injury, *i.e.*, it received more business as a result of its agreement to make personal payments to defendant. In any event, Judge Cleland's relationship with the London family and Mowat was not of a sufficiently intimate degree to induce a reasonable person with knowledge of all the facts to conclude that Judge Cleland's impartiality could be reasonably questioned.

B.

Defendant Dandy argues that the district court erroneously deprived him of his right to confront witnesses guaranteed by the Sixth Amendment by limiting his cross-examination of several witnesses and by admitting hearsay statements made by witnesses defendant was unable to cross-examine. However, defendant has mischaracterized what actually occurred at trial and the reasons for which the district court limited cross-examination. In most cases, the district court limited cross-examination or recross-examination because the questions went beyond the scope of direct or redirect examinations. The district court, however, gave defendant the opportunity to call these witnesses himself.

Defendant also argues that the district court erred in allowing hearsay into evidence. At trial, Sylvia Sophiea, a former church secretary who occasionally took messages for defendant Dandy's friend, Father Kalekas, testified for the government. The government asked her about one occasion when she told Father Kalekas that defendant had telephoned him: "Did Father Bill give you any directions at that time concerning Mr. Dandy?" J.A. 346. Sophiea's answer was that Father Kalekas had angrily replied, "[T]ell him to get off my back and get himself another patsy." J.A. 354. Defense counsel objected on the basis of hearsay. The government

argued that it was not hearsay because it was not introduced for the purpose of proving the truth of a matter asserted. Rather, it was offered to establish a breakdown in the relationship between defendant and Father Kalekas. The district court expressed doubt that the statement was in fact heresay; however, it eventually admitted the statement on the basis that it fell under the exited utterance exception to the hearsay rule. The court later denied defendant's motion for reconsideration stating simply that defendant had presented the same issues for reconsideration previously ruled upon by the court.

The government continues to assert that the statement at issue is not hearsay in that it was not offered to prove the truth of the matter asserted. *See United States v. Ellzey*, 874 F.2d 324, 330 (6th Cir. 1989). Relying on *United States v. Cruz*, 805 F.2d 1464 (11th Cir. 1986), *cert. denied*, 481 U.S. 1006 (1987), the government argues that an instruction such as the one given by Father Kalekas to Sophiea is not an assertion capable of being true or false and therefore cannot constitute hearsay. In *Cruz*, a law enforcement officer testified that he had asked one Jeanne Berry to introduce him to her supplier of cocaine. Berry later brought defendant to meet the officer, and thus the officer's statement was highly relevant because one could infer from his statement and Berry's subsequent action that the defendant was Berry's supplier. *Id.* at 1477. The Eleventh Circuit held that this out-of-court-statement was not hearsay because (1) it was not an assertion capable of being true or false, and (2) the statement was offered solely for the fact that it was made and the effect it had upon the hearer. *Id.* at 1478.

Defendant is correct in arguing that *Cruz* differs from this case in that Father Kalekas' statement was not offered in order to show the effect that it had upon its hearer, Sophiea.

However, the fact remains that Father Kalekas' statement was not offered to prove the truth of the matter asserted. In fact, as previously discussed, his statement was not an assertion. *See United States v. Gibson*, 675 F.2d 825 (6th Cir. 1982), *cert. denied*, 459 U.S. 972 (1982). Rather, the relevance of this statement lies in the fact that what was said indicated a breakdown in the relationship between Father Kalekas and defendant. Therefore, the district court did not abuse its discretion in admitting the statement. In this connection, we stated in *United States v. Hathaway*, 798 F.2d 902, 905 (6th Cir. 1986), that

> when a statement is offered to prove neither the truth nor falsity, there is no need to assess the credibility of the declarant. The significance lies entirely in the fact that the words were spoken. Thus, the statement does not fall within the Rule 801(c) definition of hearsay nor would the purposes of the hearsay rule be served by treating it as hearsay.

Thus, since the statement at issue does not constitute hearsay, it is unnecessary for us to consider whether the statement complies with the excited utterance exception to the hearsay rule.

Defendant next argues that the district court erred in allowing a statement by Wendell Smith, President of Chatham/Nu-Trax, that he knew the price of dairy products at London's rose after defendant took control of Chatham/Nu-Trax because "[t]he people in the dairy department [London's] said that the price of milk had gone up." J.A. 433. Defendant objected to this statement on the grounds of hearsay at trial, and the government agreed. The government also stated that the statement was not offered to prove the truth of the matter

asserted and suggested that the district court may wish to give a limiting instruction. In its brief, the government argues that the statement "was offered only to show what Mr. Smith's state of mind was — an issue relevant to Smith's acquiescence in Dandy's scheme to sell the worthless stock option." Government's Brief at 24. The district court responded to the government's suggestion that it give a limiting instruction by stating that "such an instruction is not necessary under the circumstances and the evidence that we have in hand already unchallenged." J.A. 434.

We do not see how the statement at issue is relevant to Smith's acquiescence in Dandy's plan to sell Chatham/Nu-Trax's stock option; nor is it clear how Smith's acquiescence to the plan was relevant in proving defendant's guilt or innocence of the offenses for which he was charged. In any event, a review of the record reveals that the statement was offered to prove that the price of London's milk rose after defendant Dandy took over Chatham/Nu-Trax. Thus, it was inadmissible hearsay. Nevertheless, Mr. Mowat had already testified at the trial that London's prices had risen when defendant Dandy became involved in London's. Therefore, we find that the admission of Smith's statement into evidence constituted harmless error because, as the district court found, evidence of defendant's effect on London's milk prices had already been admitted and was uncontradicted by any other witness. [2] *See Ellzey*, 874 F.2d at 330.

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[2] Defendant states that Mowat's testimony was "hotly contested"; however, defendant cites to no other witnesses who disputed Mowat's testimony. Rather, defendant focuses on Mowat's credibility as a witness.

C.

Defendant Dandy argues that the government engaged in prosecutorial misconduct which warrants a reversal of his conviction. Defendant cites no fewer than twenty instances of alleged prosecutorial misconduct which took place over the ten-week trial. These instances can be group into five categories: (1) inflammatory language which prejudiced the jury against defendant, (2) gestures and facial expressions calculated to be prejudicial to defendant, (3) interjection by government counsel of himself as a witness at trial and asking questions without a factual basis, (4) interruptions designed to disrupt defense counsel, and (5) improper comments on the evidence.

Prosecutorial misconduct warrants reversal of a conviction only if it "permeates the entire atmosphere of the trial." *United States v. Cummins*, 969 F.2d 223, 227 (6th Cir. 1992). Determining whether an error is reversible requires a review of the record as a whole. *United States v. Solivan*, 937 F.2d 1146, 1155 (6th Cir. 1991). Factors to consider are the strength of the evidence against the defendant, the potential for prejudice to the defendant, and the timing and firmness of the district court admonition, if any. *Cummins*, 969 F.2d at 227; *Solivan*, 937 F.2d at 1157. Where the government's conduct is, in fact, unconstitutional, "[i]t is incumbent upon the government to demonstrate that such constitutional error, resulting from the admission of highly prejudicial evidence or comment, is harmless beyond a reasonable doubt." *Solivan*, 937 F.2d at 1155.

A review of the record reveals that this was a heated trial and that emotions ran high on each side. The district court cautioned counsel for both the defense and the government regarding potentially prejudicial conduct such as

excessive facial expressions, gestures, gasps, and loudly whispered conversations between attorneys seated at counsel's table. In each case where the prosecutor became too zealous, the district court acted promptly to respond to the defense's objections and admonish the prosecutor.

As previously stated, defendant argues that the prosecutor interjected himself as a witness in the trial and asked questions for which there was absolutely no factual basis. At trial, the prosecutor attempted to question defense witness Norris Toney, a former commissioner with the Human Relations Commission of the City of Flint where he worked to raise money to assist people in the community, regarding whether he had delivered money for a Mr. Barge, his then supervisor, to a General Motors supervisor.

> Question: You never delivered any payments of any money for him [Mr. Barge] to GM officials?
>
> Answer: No.
>
> . . .
>
> Question: Well, you did, in fact, testify about that, didn't you, sir?
>
> Answer: Yes, I did.
>
> . . .
>
> Question: Is that not true, sir? Mr. Toney, did you not testify that you delivered money from Warren Barge to a General Motors supervisor?
>
> Answer: No.

J.A. 610.

Defendant argues that the government had absolutely no factual basis with which to question defense witness Toney regarding a delivery of money to a General Motors supervisor. In *United States v. Brown*, 519 F.2d 1368, 1370 (6th Cir. 1975), we held that the government committed reversible error by questioning a witness regarding previous testimony in another court proceeding where the records of the trial provided no basis for the government's questions. Later in the proceedings in this case, however, and out of the presence of the jury, witness Toney did in fact admit that he had delivered money from Barge to a General Motors supervisor. J.A. 615. [3] Thus, a factual basis did exist for the prosecutor's questions.

Defendant also objects to certain questions the government asked of Toney regarding his relationship with one Mattie Fordham. The prosecutor asked Toney if he were aware that Ms. Fordham, with whom he worked on the Human Relations Commission, had pled guilty to a federal crime and had been convicted of a federal crime. *These questions were not asked in front of the jury, but defendant moved for a mistrial.* At a later hearing on this motion, the prosecutor stated that a search of his records revealed that Ms. Fordham had not been convicted of a federal crime but that several years earlier he had agreed to put Ms. Fordham in a pretrial conversion program because of her misapplication of the Human Relations Commission's funds. The prosecutor also stated that a search of his records revealed he had prosecuted several of Ms. Fordham's family members for federal crimes. Because the jury never heard this line of questioning, it could not have prejudiced the jury against

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[3] Toney stated that he did deliver money to a Don Anderson, a GM supervisor, "for the purpose of his house." J.A. 615.

defendant, and, therefore, even though the prosecutor's questions were improper, they do not warrant a reversal.

Defendant also argues that in his closing argument, the prosecutor, while vouching for a witness's credibility, made highly prejudicial comments which warrant reversal. The following took place during the government's closing argument:

> Prosecutor: But Mr. McColgan is an honest man, he told the truth to the FBI and he told the truth to you. . . .
>
> Defense Counsel: Your honor, I'm going to object to the prosecution vouching for the credibility of the witness, giving his opinion as to the credibility of the witness.
>
> The Court: There may be merit to that objection, Mr. Haveland [sic]. The argument should be restricted to the evidence and reasonable inferences from the evidence.
>
> Prosecutor: Your Honor, this is all the evidence. This is the testimony of Mr. McColgan.
>
> The Court: Let me clarify that any assertions that are made from evidence, inferences from precise evidence and — continue with your argument — [sic] distinguishing the merits of the objections just raised.
>
> Prosecutor: Well, to make it clear, ladies and gentlemen, everything I am telling you is based

> on the evidence in this case. If you don't remember it the way I am saying it, disregard what I say. Rely on what you heard. I believe Mr. McColgan told you that he had told the truth to the FBI when he was interviewed by Agent Clemmer on two or three occasions in previous years. He admitted to Agent Clemmer that he had, indeed, paid this kickback. He was subpoenaed to testify in this case, he was under oath, he told you he didn't lie to anyone and he wasn't lying to you.
>
> And my point is why would he lie about this? If there were any incentive on his part to lie, it would have been to deny that he had paid a kickback.

J.A. 744-46.

It was improper for the prosecutor to state that Mr. McColgan is honest. Such a statement conveys a conviction of personal belief regarding the witness's veracity. *See United States v. Bess*, 593 F.2d 749, 755 (6th Cir. 1979) ("expressions of personal belief of innocence or guilt of an accused are error"). However, the district court immediately instructed the jury that all assertions are to be made from the evidence. The prosecutor then told the jury to "disregard what I say" if it did not find his statements based on the evidence. J.A. 745. Moreover, while the prosecutor's statement was improper, it was not as egregious as it might have been had the prosecutor used the phrase "I believe" that Mr. McColgan is honest. *Cf. Bess*, 593 F.2d at 757 (holding that prosecutor's misconduct constituted reversible error where the prosecutor stated "I believe beyond a reasonable doubt" that the defendant was guilty and the district court failed to

give immediate curative admonishment). Given the degree of egregiousness of the prosecutor's statement, the weight of the evidence against defendant, and the district court's immediate curative instruction to the jury, the prosecutor's misconduct did not constitute reversible error. *See United States v. Krebs* 788 F.2d 1166, 1177 (6th Cir. 1986), *cert. denied*, 479 U.S. 930 (1986)(holding that prosecutor's statement "I want to suggest to you that in this trial testimony she was telling the truth" did not constitute reversible error given the substantial evidence against the defendant and the trial court's corrective measures to eliminate prejudice).

D.

Defendant Dandy argues that he was deprived of a fair trial by the district court's questioning of witnesses and commenting on the evidence. In *United States v. Slone*, 833 F.2d 595, 597 (6th Cir. 1987), we stated:

> The presiding judge should conduct a trial in an orderly way with a view to eliciting the truth and to attaining justice between the parties. He must see that the issues are not obscured and that the testimony is not misunderstood. The trial court has the right to interrogate witnesses for this purpose.
>
> The presiding judge, however, must be careful to "'always be calmly judicial, dispassionate and impartial. He should sedulously avoid all appearances of advocacy as to those questions which are ultimately to be submitted to the jury.'" "'The basic requirement is one of impartiality and demeanor as well as in actions.'"

(Citations omitted.) We also noted three instances in which a district court "has good reason to interject himself into the trial." *Id.* First, judicial intervention may be necessary for clarification in a lengthy and complex trial. Second, it may be necessary for clarification where attorneys are unprepared or obstreperous or if the facts are becoming confused and neither side is able to resolve the confusion. Third, judicial intervention may be necessary if a witness is difficult or if the witness's testimony is not credible and the attorney fails to adequately probe the witness or if the witness becomes inadvertently confused. *Id.; see also United States v. Blakeney*, 942 F.2d 1001, 1013 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 112 S. Ct. 646 (1991) *and* 112 S. Ct. 881 (1992); *United States v. Seago*, 930 F.2d 482, 492 (6th Cir. 1991).

Defendant's argument is meritless. First, the district court did engage in lengthy questioning of a witness regarding the definition of the terms "backdating," "imputed interest," and "net operating loss carryover." J.A. 408-417. Defendant objected on the grounds that the district court's inquiry into those areas "gives an impression to the jury that the Court feels that these particular areas are more important than the other areas." J.A. 420. The district court noted defense counsel's objection and then gave a long cautionary instruction to the jury not to form an opinion regarding the case simply on the basis that the court had asked these questions.

Second, one juror submitted a question asking, "Why would you have included payments to Kirdassi as income to Mr. Dandy when the W-2 was made out to Kirdassi." J.A. 447. Defendant objected on the grounds that the prosecution's theory was once again being emphasized to the prejudice of the defendant. The district court then asked a series of questions designed to answer the juror's question.

Third, the court questioned a witness regarding the difference between a gift and a bribe. Defendant objected on the grounds that the question highlighted the government's case, was prejudicial, and gave the jury the impression that the district court was prejudiced against defendant. Defendant also now argues that the questions were prejudicial because the witness, an IRS agent, testified that any business entertainment given by one business to another business over $25 had to be reported as income by the recipient, and if it was not, then the IRS treated it as a bribe.

As we have stated in *Slone*, "[t]he fact that testimony elicited by the trial judge may have damaged appellant's case, does not automatically cast the court in the improper role of surrogate prosecutor." 833 F.2d at 600 (citation omitted). This was a long and complicated case conducted over a period of ten weeks and involving difficult concepts. The district court was justified in reviewing those difficult concepts which were crucial to the disposition of the case. From the record, it is apparent that when initially presented by the witnesses, many of these concepts were not fully explained in terms that a layman could understand.

Moreover, the questions were stated in a neutral manner. The court did not interrupt examination by either party's counsel and gave defense counsel an opportunity for follow-up after it asked questions. In addition, as previously mentioned, the district court at one point gave a lengthy cautionary instruction to the jury. Therefore, we conclude that the district court's questioning did not deprive defendant of a fair trial. *See Slone*, 833 F.2d at 600-601 (holding that the district court did not act improperly by asking witness questions where it did not interfere with defendant's cross-examination rights, court gave the opportunity for follow-up questions, asked questions for the purpose of clarification, and

gave a cautionary instruction to the jury). In addition, the district court's occasional summary of the witness's explanations was not improper. "A federal judge may analyze the evidence, comment upon it, and express his views with regard to the trial testimony and the witnesses." *United States v. Murdock*, 290 U.S. 389, 394 (1933), *overruled on other grounds, Murphy v. Waterfront Comm'n of New York Harbor*, 378 U.S. 52 (1964); *see also Blakeney*, 942 F.2d at 1013 (holding that a district court may "analyze and dissect the evidence, as along as the district judge does not distort or add to it"). In this case, the district court was careful to comment and summarize in a neutral manner for the purpose of clarification, neither adding to nor distorting the evidence.

E.

Defendant Dandy argues that Counts 1 and 2 of the superseding indictment charging tax evasion under 26 U.S.C. § 7201 are time-barred under the applicable statute of limitations and that insufficient evidence exists to support his conviction on these counts. Counts 1 and 2 of the original indictment allege tax evasion occurring on June 13, 1983, and July 3, 1984, the dates on which the income tax returns for tax years 1982 and 1983 were filed. 26 U.S.C. § 6531 provides a six-year statute of limitations period for tax evasion, and the original indictment was filed on December 14, 1990, more than six years after the tax returns were filed. However, the government filed a superseding indictment alleging that *acts of evasion* relating to tax years 1982 and 1983 occurred through November of 1985. Defendant argues that the statute of limitations began to run for each count on the date that each tax return was filed. The government argues, however, that the statute of limitations for each count of tax evasion began to run only when the last affirmative act

of evasion occurred, thus bringing Counts 1 and 2 within the six-year statute of limitations period.

In *United States v. Hook*, 781 F.2d 1166, 1173 n.9 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 479 U.S. 882 (1986), we declined to decide whether the limitations period begins to run when income tax returns are filed or due or whether the limitations period begins to run at the last affirmative act of evasion in furtherance of the crime. However, the two circuits which have addressed this specific issue have held that it is the date of the latest affirmative act of evasion that triggers the statute of limitations. *See United States v. Winfield*, 960 F.2d 970, 973 (11th Cir. 1992)(per curiam); *United States v. Ferris*, 807 F.2d 269, 271 (1st Cir. 1986), *cert. denied*, 480 U.S. 950 (1987). We adopt the First and Eleventh Circuits' approach to this issue because to hold otherwise would only reward a defendant for successfully evading discovery of his tax fraud for a period of six years subsequent to the date the returns were filed. For example, in this case, defendant's evasive acts in 1985 prevented the IRS from learning about defendant's income tax fraud occurring in 1982 and 1983.

Defendant relies on *United States v. Habig*, 390 U.S. 222 (1968), to support his argument that the statute of limitations should begin to run at the time the return is filed. In *Habig*, the Supreme Court held that the statute of limitations for an attempt to evade taxes by filing a false return under 26 U.S.C. § 7201 began to run on the date that the returns were actually filed, not the date that they were due to be filed. The Court determined that to hold otherwise would be to accept the argument that "Congress intended the limitations period to begin to run before [defendants] committed the acts upon which the crimes were based." *Id.* at 225.

Habig actually supports the position that the statute of limitations for income tax evasion alleged in Counts 1 and 2 in this case did not begin to run until the last affirmative evasive acts occurring sometime in November of 1985. This conclusion is so because it is these evasive acts, occurring within six years of the superseding indictment, which form the basis of the crimes alleged in Counts 1 and 2 of the superseding indictment. Finally, this result seems reasonable when one considers the fact that had it not been for defendant's evasive acts in 1985, the IRS would very likely have discovered defendant's income tax fraud occurring in 1982 and 1983. To hold that the statute of limitations for income tax evasion occurring in 1982 and 1983 began to run on the date the returns were filed would reward defendant for successfully evading discovery of his tax fraud for a period of six years subsequent to the date the returns were filed.

Defendant next argues that evidence of affirmative acts of evasion within the statutory period is insufficient to sustain his conviction on Counts 1 and 2. This issue is reviewed on appeal from the district court's ruling on either a motion for a new trial or a motion for judgment not withstanding the verdict. *Dixon v. Montgomery Ward*, 783 F.2d 55 (6th Cir. 1986). Defendant does not claim nor does the record reveal that defendant has made either motion. Therefore, we decline to consider this issue.

F.

Defendant Dandy argues that his conviction on Count 8 for mail fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1341 must be reversed because it was based on a theory not recognized in this circuit nor alleged in the indictment. Specifically, defendant argues that the indictment sets forth a constructive trust theory which is inadequate to sustain his conviction for

mail fraud. Under the constructive trust theory, any economic benefit acquired by a fiduciary as a result of a breach of his fiduciary duty owed to a principal is held in trust for the principal. *United States v. Runnels*, 833 F.2d 1183, 1188 (6th Cir. 1987), *vacated on other grounds*, 877 F.2d 481 (6th Cir. 1989). The constructive trust theory does not require that the *principal* has suffered some actual economic loss, simply that the *fiduciary* has benefitted economically from his breach. *Id.* at 1187.

The superseding indictment charges that defendant "devised and executed a scheme and artifice to defraud Nu-Trax, Inc., d/b/a Chatham Super Markets, by obtaining money which by law should have been paid or credited to an account of Nu-Trax, Inc." The district court instructed the jury that the director of a corporation is a fiduciary of the corporation and that it is his duty to make the best bargains possible for the corporation and that any property received from transactions he conducts on the corporation's behalf belong to the corporation. The district court also instructed the jury that it was not sufficient that defendant may have simply breached his duty toward the corporation, unless that breach involved money or property belonging to or required to be delivered to the corporation.

In this case, the indictment and the jury instructions make it clear that the defendant could not be found guilty of mail fraud simply on the basis that defendant as a fiduciary profited from his breach of his fiduciary duty. Rather, as the Supreme Court indicated in *McNally v. United States*, 483 U.S. 350, 360 (1987), Chatham/Nu-Trax must have suffered a specific property loss above and beyond that created by defendant's fiduciary duty to the corporation. Here the evidence was that London's Farm Dairy would have charged Chatham/Nu-Trax lower prices for milk had it not been for

the kickbacks they had to pay to defendant. Because the indictment, evidence, and jury instructions are all based on concrete economic harm to Chatham/Nu-Trax, defendant's argument must fail. *See United States v. Asher*, 854 F.2d 1483, 1494 (3d Cir. 1988), *cert. denied*, 488 U.S. 1029 (1989)("those cases that have *sustained* mail fraud convictions have done so where the 'bottom line' of the scheme or artifice had the inevitable result of effecting monetary or property losses to the employer or to the state.").

G.

Defendant Dandy argues that his conviction on Count 9 for mail fraud in violation of 28 U.S.C. § 1341 must be reversed because the indictment alleges that defendant engaged in a scheme to defraud the "future" creditors of Chatham/Nu-Trax. According to defendant, a future creditor has no tangible property interest and thus has no enforceable property right under the mail fraud statute. However, Count 9 of the superseding indictment alleged that defendant defrauded Chatham/Nu-Trax *and* its future creditors. In its instructions to the jury on Count 9, the district court instructed the jury that it must find the defendant defrauded Chatham/Nu-Trax. It did not refer to future creditors. Therefore, the jury could not have convicted defendant on Count 9 unless it found defendant had defrauded Chatham/Nu-Trax, and thus, it is unnecessary for us to consider defendant's argument in regard to future creditors. *See United States v. Ochs*, 842 F.2d 515, 520 (1st Cir. 1988).

Defendant also argues that his conviction under Count 9 must be reversed because the district court instructed the jury to consider defendant's status as a fiduciary in determining whether defendant had defrauded Chatham/Nu-Trax under Count 9. However, the indictment alleged that

defendant defrauded Chatham/Nu-Trax of $7 million in assets which belonged to the company. These assets are concrete property interests, and simply because defendant possessed a fiduciary relationship to Chatham/Nu-Trax which enabled him to defraud the company of $7 million in assets does not render his conviction invalid. *See McNally*, 483 U.S. at 360.

H.

Defendant Dandy argues that the district court committed reversible error in refusing to instruct the jury that repayment is a factor to be considered in determining whether a particular transaction is a loan. At issue on Counts 1 through 5 was whether the payments defendant received from Hamady constituted taxable income or loans. Defendant's theory of defense was that the payments were loans and defendant offered as evidence of this theory the fact that defendant eventually repaid the money to Hamady. The district court simply instructed the jury that it must consider whether any funds received by defendant constituted ordinary income or loans and that it must consider all circumstances surrounding such payments.

It is reversible error not to present a defendant's theory of defense adequately in a full statement of the law. *United States v. Duncan*, 850 F.2d 1104, 1118 (6th Cir. 1988). However, the district court did fully present defendant's theory of defense to the jury by explaining that it must determine whether the money given from Hamady to defendant was income or a loan. The fact that defendant eventually repaid the money to Hamady is evidence which the jury may consider in determining whether the money was a loan or income, but it is not a legal theory standing alone. Therefore, the district court's refusal to give defendant's specific instruction was not error. *See id.*

I.

The government agrees with defendant Dandy that the district court lacked jurisdiction to file its "corrected judgment" more than seven days after it entered the original judgment. Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 35(c) authorizes the district court to correct its judgment for clerical errors only within seven days after the sentence was imposed. The original judgment stated that the term of the sentence "ought to be served consecutively under the provisions of 18 U.S.C. § 4205(a) which provides that defendant shall be eligible for parole at such date as the parole commission may determine." However, former 18 U.S.C. § 4205(a), which is applicable to this case, provided that "a prisoner shall be eligible for release on parole after serving one-third of such term or terms . . . ." The corrected judgment states that the terms of the sentence "shall be served consecutively under the provisions of 18 U.S.C. § 4205(a)." It appears that the district court made a simple error and attempted to correct it. Therefore, the corrected judgment should be vacated and the original judgment be remanded to the district court in order to resolve the contradiction as to defendant's parole eligibility date.

III.

For the reasons stated, the June 29, 1992, corrected judgment of the district court is VACATED, and the June 3, 1992, judgement of the district court is REMANDED to the district court for the purpose of correcting the judgment in order that it conforms to the express intentions of the district court as stated at sentencing and with the language of former 18 U.S.C. § 4205(a) as it applies to defendant. In all other respects, the district court is AFFIRMED.

APPENDIX B

FILED
AUG 11, 1993
LEONARD GREEN, Clerk

Nos. 92-1702/1840

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, Plaintiff-Appellee,	)	
v.	)	ORDER
ALEX DANDY, Defendant-Appellant.	)	

BEFORE: MILBURN and RYAN, Circuit Judges; and COFFIN, Senior Circuit Judge.*

The court's opinion in this case is amended by deleting the last paragraph under Part II.E. and substituting therefor the following:

> Defendant next argues that the evidence is insufficient to sustain his conviction on Counts 1 and 2. In this case, although defendant made a motion for judgment of acquittal under Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 29 at the close of the government's case and at the close of all the evidence, defendant never argued to the district court that the evidence was insufficient on Counts 1 and 2. Following the close of the government's

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* Honorable Frank M. Coffin, Senior Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, sitting by designation.

case, defendant's counsel made the following argument to the district court, merely reasserting his pretrial motion to dismiss on statute of limitations grounds:

MR. ROTATORI: Okay, your Honor, with regard to Counts 1 and 2, I think we can take them together and save time because the argument for both are [sic] the same.

With regard to Counts 1 and 2, the defendant in support of its motion for a judgment of acquittal pursuant to Rule 29, incorporates by reference, the legal memorandum submitted to the Court when the defendant moved to dismiss Counts 1 and 2 based upon the statute of limitations.

THE COURT: So you have a statute of limitations issue which is — which we have roundly discussed, and I have denied.

And is there any additional basis found within the evidence here at trial or lack — asserted lack of evidence with regard to any points in that case?

MR. ROTATORI: Substantively we have no Rule 29 motion with regard to Counts 1 —

THE COURT: Procedurally you wish to reiterate your motion — I don't even know it's necessary to do that, but in an abundance —

> MR. ROTATORI: Just briefly. At the time we made the motion prior to trial, we did not have the testimony of, I think, the most critical witness with regard to the government's position that the statute of limitation was extended with regard to Counts 1 and 2 because of the allegation in the superseding indictment . . . .

Trial transcript, Vol. XVII at 143-145. Defendant's counsel then proceeded to argue that there was insufficient evidence to support the conviction on Count 6, charging obstruction of justice, and that the failure of that charge would require dismissal of Counts 1 and 2.

> At the close of all evidence, defendant's counsel stated:
>
> MR. LORD: We would make a general renewal of our Rule 29 motions at the end of the case.
>
> THE COURT: So noted.
>
> MR. LORD: I would make a specific renewal as to two particular counts.

Defendant's counsel then made specific arguments that the evidence was insufficient on Counts 6 and 7. Trial transcript, Vol. XXXVI at 9-11 (emphasis added). The district court then rejected defendant's challenges to the sufficiency of the evidence on Count 6, and defendant has not contested that ruling in this appeal.

This court will not entertain a defendant's challenge to the sufficiency of the evidence on appeal unless the defendant moved for a judgment of acquittal under Rule 29 at the close of the government's case-in-chief and at the close of all the evidence. *United States v. Williams*, 940 F.2d 176, 180 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 112 S. Ct. 666 (1991). Such a failure to make the required Rule 29 motions constitutes a waiver of an objection to the sufficiency of the evidence. *Id.* Although specificity of grounds is not required in a Rule 29 motion, *see, United States v. Gjurashaj*, 706 F.2d 395, 399 (2d Cir. 1983), where a Rule 29 motion is made on specific grounds, all grounds not specified are waived:

> However, where as here a motion for acquittal is made on specified grounds which do not include any objection to venue, we think that objection has been waived. The specification of grounds in the motion is an indication that counsel has evaluated the record and has these particular reasons for his motion. His omission of venue from those reasons is similar to a general failure to move for acquittal in spite of the government's failure to provide any substantial evidence to support the alleged venue. In the latter circumstances, the Sixth Circuit found the objection waived, *United States v. McMaster*, 343 F.2d 176, 181 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 382 U.S. 818, 86 S. Ct. 42, 15 L.Ed.2d 65 (1965); *cf. United States v. Michelson*, 165 F.2d 732, 734 (2d Cir.)(dictum), *aff'd*, 335 U.S. 469, 69 S. Ct. 213, 93 L.Ed. 168 (1948).

> The Ninth Circuit has found waiver where the defendant made a motion to acquit on specific grounds and did not mention venue. *Gilbert v. United States*, 359 F.2d 285, 288 (9th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 385 U.S. 882, 87 S. Ct. 169, 17 L.Ed.2d 109 (1966); *United States v. Brothman*, 191 F.2d 70, 72-73 (2d Cir. 1951)(dictum). We think this the proper result. It is not unreasonable to expect the defendant to make some reference to the venue point in order to save his objection for appeal. Where he moves to acquit without specification, we might assume venue to be included among his unarticulated disagreements with the conduct of the case, but where he does specify grounds for the motion and omits mention of venue we must conclude that he cannot be considered to have raised a question concerning the place of the trial. Since there can be no doubt that Rivera did move for acquittal on specific grounds without mention of improper venue at that time, he waived any objection he may have had.

United States v. Rivera, 388 F.2d 545, 548 (2d Cir.), *cert. denied*, 392 U.S. 937 (1968).

From the record, it appears that defendant's Rule 29 motion did not challenge the sufficiency of the evidence. After being directly asked by the court whether he challenged the sufficiency of the evidence, defendant's counsel replied that he did not. Moreover, the foregoing authorities make it clear that because defendant asserted specific grounds for his Rule 29 motion, viz., the statute of limitations, defendant has

waived all other grounds. Further, at the close of all the evidence, defendant merely adopted his previous motion, which we have found inadequate. Therefore, we hold that defendant has waived his challenge to the sufficiency of the evidence on Counts 1 and 2.

ENTERED BY ORDER OF THE COURT

/s/ Leonard Green
Clerk

APPENDIX C

Received Jun 3 1991

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
NORTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Plaintiff,

v. Case No: 90-CR-50048-BC
90-CR-50054-BC

ALEX DANDY,
Defendant.
_____/

ORDER DENYING DEFENDANT'S
MOTION FOR DISQUALIFICATION

This matter is before the court on defendant's motion for disqualification pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 455(a). Based on the motion and accompanying documents, the court finds that a reasonable person with knowledge of the facts presented would not conclude that the judge's impartiality would reasonably be questioned. Defendant's motion is therefore DENIED.

The underlying criminal complaint against the defendant contains, among others, charges that he violated the mail fraud statutes by engaging in a scheme to defraud NU-TRAX, INC. Defendant was Chairman of the Board of Directors of NU-TRAX. The indictment alleges defendant, for the privilege of allowing them to do business with NU-TRAX, required London's Farm Dairy, Inc. (London's), to pay kickbacks to Michigan Milk Movers, Inc., of which

defendant was sole shareholder. The government's theory is that defendant engaged in a scheme to defraud NU-TRAX, INC. by means of false pretenses and misrepresentations and that he used the mails, at least in part, to execute the scheme.

First in chambers and then on the record on May 19, 1991, this judge informed the parties that London's had its origins and maintained its corporate base in Port Huron, Michigan, and that, since he was a Port Huron native, it may be no surprise that he has been an acquaintance of certain members of the London family and a few London's Farm Dairy executives. Particularly, the court noted that, although they were merely acquaintances, Mr. Douglas Mowat, an executive in the corporation, was not only known to him, but also may well have been among the several hundred people who had contributed $10 or $20 to his campaign for re-election as St. Clair County Prosecutor in the mid-to-late 1980's. The government then confirmed the court's initial impression that Mr. Mowat would be a witness at Mr. Dandy's trial.

Based on this information, defendant moved for disqualification. The government has responded and the motion is ripe for review.

28 U.S.C. § 455(a) provides that "any justice, judge or magistrate of the United States shall disqualify himself in any proceeding in which his impartiality might be questioned." The legal standard to be applied to a motion for disqualification under this section is well established in the Sixth Circuit:

> A district judge is required to recuse himself "only if a reasonable person with knowledge of all the facts would conclude that the judge's

> impartiality might reasonably be questioned." This standard is objective and is not based "on the subjective view of a party."

United States v. Nelson, 922 F.2d 311, 319 (6th Cir. 1991).

Defendant argues that during the course of trial the court will be called upon to rule regarding the admissibility of Mr. Mowat's testimony and possibly that of the owners of London's Farm Dairy. He contends that the court's longstanding relationship with such witnesses may have a conscious or unconscious impact upon the court's rulings. Defendant further contends that serious questions of impartiality may arise at and with regard to sentencing. Lastly, defendant contends that the court's relationship with these witnesses lends an "appearance of impropriety" to the proceedings.

The court finds defendant's arguments insufficient both in specificity and persuasiveness to warrant a grant of a disqualification motion.

Firstly, this case will involve a jury trial. Accordingly, the court will not be called upon to be a fact-finder, and to weigh the credibility of the potential witnesses — those will remain tasks for the jury. Secondly, although defendant has suggested that the court will have to make evidentiary rulings regarding Mr. Mowat's testimony, defendant has pointed to nothing to illuminate how the court's acquaintance with the witness could conceivably affect any rulings on evidence admissibility. The fact that the court knows Mr. Mowat, or were even considered a friend of his, is irrelevant to the issue of whether "similar act" or other evidence is admissible. The foundation or lack of it with respect to "404(b)" evidence must rise or fall upon the quality

of the evidence and the requirements of the law, not upon witness credibility determinations by the court. Thirdly, it is important to note that the indictment alleges that NU-TRAX, INC. was the corporation victimized by fraudulent activity . . . not London's corporately and not Mr. Mowat personally. While defendant's counsel, on the record on the 19th, suggested that there may exist personal animosity or litigation, or both, between Mr. Mowat and Mr. Dandy, and that that situation could be viewed objectively as a source of tension in the court's efforts to maintain neutrality, he presents nothing in his motion to even reiterate, let alone to substantiate that initial in-court assertion. Nothing is proposed by either the defense or the government that would demonstrate that London's or Mowat has any stake in the proceedings or anything at all to gain or lose from the outcome of this case.

Finally, defendant has suggested nothing as to how the court's acquaintance with Mr. Mowat could be a factor affecting sentencing should the jury return a verdict of guilty. This case is not one in which just one critical witness — Mowat — is the keystone to a successful sentencing argument brought by the government, with a favorable determination by the court of that witness's story spelling sentencing-guidelines doom for the defendant. Were that scenario even minimally suggested by the facts as made known to the court here, the result could arguably be different. The defendant, however, is silent on this feature of the case as well. Indeed, the Guidelines' leveling and objectifying effect itself denies wind to the sails of defendant's argument in this respect.

The defense here has presented a sensible and accurate dissertation on the state of the law in the area of disqualification, but provided little of substance in the pursuit of a fair and accurate determination of the issue in this case.

Based on the paucity of affirmative evidence presented, the court must determine that a reasonable person would not conclude that the court's impartiality would be questioned. Defendant's motion for disqualification must consequently be DENIED.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

/s/ ROBERT H. CLELAND
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

DATED: May 30th, 1991

APPENDIX D

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
SIXTH CIRCUIT
U.S. POST OFFICE & COURTHOUSE BUILDING
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45202-3988 TELEPHONE
LEONARD GREEN (513) 664-2953
CLERK FTS 684-2953

August 11, 1993

Mr. Robert Haviland
Mr. Richard L. Stoper, Jr.

Re: Case Nos. 92-1702/1840
USA v. Dandy

Dear Counsel:

Upon consideration of the petition for rehearing en banc filed by the appellant in the above case, the hearing panel has issued the enclosed order.

In light of the panel's action, we ask that counsel for the appellant to determine whether the petition for en banc reconsideration is to be withdrawn. If it is not, the appellant shall have until Wednesday, September 1, 1993 to file a memorandum of law supplementing their original petition. Should the appellee wish to seek en banc reconsideration of the enclosed opinion, they may do so by filing no later than Wednesday, September 1, 1993 and appropriate petition conforming with the requirements of the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure and the Rules of the Sixth Circuit. If this office does not hear from either party by the close of business on September 1, we will render the petition moot and no further action will be taken.

Any party filing an additional petition or memorandum should file twenty-five (25) copies of each document.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Leonard Green
Clerk

pe

APPENDIX E

FILED
SEP 15, 1993
LEONARD GREEN, Clerk

Nos. 92-1702/1840

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, Plaintiff-Appellee,	)	
v.	)	ORDER
ALEX DANDY, Defendant-Appellant.	)	

BEFORE: MILBURN and RYAN, Circuit Judges; and COFFIN,* Senior Circuit Judge.

The court having received a petition for rehearing en banc and its supplement based on the order amending the opinion, and the petition and supplement having been circulated not only to the original panel members but also to all other active judges of this court, and no judge of this court having requested a vote on the suggestion for rehearing en banc, the petition for rehearing has been referred to the original hearing panel.

The panel has further reviewed the petition for rehearing and its supplement and concludes that the issues raised in the petition were fully considered upon the original submission and decision of the case. Accordingly, the petition is denied.

ENTERED BY ORDER OF THE COURT

/s/ Leonard Green
Clerk

* Hon. Frank M. Coffin, Senior Circuit Judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, sitting by designation.

APPENDIX F

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
NORTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

-vs- No. 90-20054-FL

ALEX DANDY, MOTION
Defendant.
_____/

Proceedings had and testimony taken in the above-entitled matter before the Honorable Robert H. Cleland, United States District Judge, at Bay City, Michigan, on the 14th day of May, 1991.

APPEARANCES:
STEPHEN MARKMAN, U.S. ATTORNEY
BY: ROBERT HAVELAND, AUSA,
AND THEODORE FOREMAN, AUSA,
Appearing on behalf of the Government
ROBERT ROTATORI, ESQ., and
WARREN J. PERLOVE, ESQ.,
Appearing on behalf of the Defendant.

* * *

THE COURT: Thank you.

Counsel both for the government and for the defense had a brief opportunity, roughly an hour ago, to discuss order of arguments and some other issues preliminarily in chambers and off the record.

At that time I notified both sides that I was acquainted with a person whom I since have been informed will be a witness in this case.

This individual's name is Douglas Mowat, who is an executive with London Farm Dairy, Inc. which is a Michigan corporation with its headquarters, as I'm informed, its headquarters in Port Huron, Michigan.

I hale from Port Huron, Michigan, maintain a home there and have been acquainted with various members of the London family over the course of twenty — closer, really, to thirty years.

I informed counsel that Glen London, one of the senior members of that family, was an across the street neighbor of my parents and myself when I was in college — up through the time I was in college and law school. To my knowledge he's no longer associated with the corporation, I think he's retired from that. I may be incorrect, but in any event I'm acquainted with a friend of his.

Additionally, I am acquainted with a Michigan State representative named Terry London, who is from the Port Huron metropolitan area, Marysville, Michigan. He's not, to my knowledge, in any way associated with the corporation but is a — I think he's a nephew of Glen London and his son or one of the other London brothers.

He's fulltime in public service, though, to the best of my knowledge.

Finally with respect to Douglas Mowat, this is an individual whom I have known for close to twenty years in one fashion or another, as he was working his way up through the corporate structure.

He and I, though we are on friendly acquaintance terms, have never socialized at one another's houses. We have commonly met, however, at community functions, dinners, testimonials, fund raisers and things of that nature over the course of years.

Before I took this job I was an elected official in St. Clare County, I was the prosecuting attorney of that county, and although I did not have political opposition in any of my campaigns, I did throw fund raiser celebrations annually. And although I'm not positive of it, I would expect that Mr. Mowat and probably his wife, quite likely others from the London organization, were contributors to my campaign to the tune of perhaps ten or twenty dollars apiece, something along those lines.

I expect that that was sporadic and not regular, and in no event do I think there was anything particularly significant about that — significant financially about any of that.

I think I haven't seen Mr. Mowat in well over a couple of years now and certainly have not had any discussion with him over the facts of this case during any of this time.

Nor do I think I have discussed his business with him at all, quite frankly. I have discussed community affairs perhaps from time to time but not anything about London Dairy.

Now, that in combination with the fact that I occasionally drink London's milk and eat London's ice cream puts the parties fully on notice, I think, as to — in terms of what the Court may personally have in the way of history on this affair.

I put it to defense counsel and to the government to react to this disclosure, and to let me know if either side

believes that there is anything that need be done by the Court with respect to these.

First of all, Mr. Haveland on behalf of the government, you told us in the previous discussion Mr. Mowat will indeed be a witness in this case, true?

MR. HAVELAND: That is correct, your Honor. I would like to amplify that slightly. He did testify at the grand jury and the defense has already gotten a copy of his grand jury testimony.

THE COURT: All right. Now, Mr. Rotatori?

MR. ROTATORI: Yes, your Honor. It's a bit more complicated for the defense. I believe Mr. Mowat is going to be the chief government witness with regard to at least one count on this indictment, and perhaps providing testimony with regard to other — which would be relevant to other counts in the indictment.

Additionally, I just found out from Mr. Dandy that apparently there was some civil litigation between Mr. Mowat and London Farm Dairy and Mr. Dandy and Hamady Brothers Food Centers.

Of course, this is the first time that this subject has been broached to Mr. Dandy, we would beg the Court's indulgence to have a day or two before we respond to the Court with regard to this issue.

THE COURT: Can we legitimately make any progress with the motions that are scheduled for progress this afternoon, counsel, without resolution of this issue?

MR. ROTATORI: I would guess not, now if the Court —

THE COURT: That's why I wanted to handle this right at the beginning, counsel.

MR. ROTATORI: I appreciate the Court's concern, and I would agree with the Court. I mean, if it is of the nature that would cause the defense to raise an objection then obviously the Court probably shouldn't even hear the motions.

THE COURT: Certainly, at least I shouldn't decide them.

MR. ROTATORI: I would agree with the Court in that regard. The only thing I can say is this sort of takes us by surprise. We really hadn't —

THE COURT: Have you made any progress in the last hour in ruminating about this counsel?

MR. ROTATORI: No, we discussed it briefly before we entered into the courtroom, at that time the Court was taking a plea.

I suppose — frankly, as counsel for Mr. Dandy, I would like to do some investigative work into this litigation, you know, whether there was personal animosity between Mr. Mowat and Mr. Dandy, that type of thing, whether Mr. Mowat has certain opinions with regard to Mr. Dandy's business style or ethics, and whether those — whether all would be relevant and whether those expressions from Mr. Mowat, a quote friend of the Court as the Court has described it, would raise to the level of requiring the defense to ask the Court to recuse itself.

THE COURT: I can conceive, counsel, of a set of circumstances in which that would — it would give a defendant pause. I don't think there's any reason for that at this point, quite frankly. I think that I — I'm going to give you the benefit of my feeling about it, without prejudice to

your ability to raise it, and determine what you think you need to do.

I think I am far enough distant from any particular friendship or former association with Mr. Mowat or any of the others in the London organization that I would not be influenced by apparent feelings of animosity if any were the case.

But I think it's only fair to give you a chance to ruminate about it further beyond just the 60 minutes or so you have had here.

I will — I hate to bring six people together for an hour and a half this afternoon without reaching any result on these things or allowing you to express your feelings about your various motions though. I'm inclined to receive some comments on the merits of your motion on Counts 1, 2, 8 and 9 at a minimum.

Mr. Haveland, just a moment ago you rose to address something, do you want to express some other feeling about this?

MR. HAVELAND: I apologize, your Honor, for rising but I fear the Court was about to rule, and I do want to oppose any motion to adjourn these arguments.

The defendant has today filed a motion to adjourn this case yet again after at least four adjournments have already been granted, most of them with the stipulation of the government. I do not see any basis for a further adjournment at this point.

The only think Mr. Rotatori has stated is that his client has informed him of some litigation between Mr. Mowat and Mr. Dandy.

So be it. I have no information —

THE COURT: Between the corporations, I think, was it not? Was it personal litigation?

MR. ROTATORI: There was personal litigation in addition to business litigation between the corporations, yes. It was both.

MR. HAVELAND: My argument makes — admits no distinction. Even if it was personal litigation between the two of them, so much the better for the defendant, he will have that available to impeach Mr. Mowat at trial.

The point here is whether the Court's knowledge of or friendship with Mr. Mowat would have any conceivable impact on the jury, which is going to be the finder of fact in this case.

Mr. Rotatori has not suggested anything that in any way would affect the jury's determination. Under those circumstances, I just do not see the point in adjourning the argument on these motions. I have no objection to him being given additional time to come up with some theory on which this fact should affect the trial, but I see no reason to delay matters right now.

THE COURT: Mr. Haveland, it's more than a defense decision. I don't think the Court's acquaintanceship with any particular witness would have any bearing on this, if such were urged I wouldn't go along with that line of argument. The concern I would have from the defense side of this would be in the event of conviction and impending sentence.

The thing I think Mr. Dandy's point of view needs to be resolved about is the Court's independent or potential impact on a variety of things that may have.

I reiterate, I think it would have none, quite frankly, but that's not determinative in my opinion.

I'm going to adjourn the hearing on these motions but I'm not going to adjourn them for long. I'm going to — this is Tuesday afternoon, and counsel for the defendant will inform my courtroom deputy clerk no later than the close of business on Thursday afternoon, the 16th of May, and concurrently inform me either by telephone or Fax transmission to Mr. Haveland on behalf of the government, any reaction along — a reaction one way or the other with respect to these issues we have discussed this afternoon.

At that time I'm going to be prepared to set a substitute hearing date. In the event I determine that either by stipulation or through my own judgment, the matter would be continued very shortly thereafter, within days I think, thereafter for argument on these issues.

You're all from Flint, are you not, gentlemen?

MR. ROTATORI: I'm from Cleveland, Ohio, your Honor.

THE COURT: Where are you from?

MR. PERLOVE: I live in Ann Arbor, but I practice in Flint, Judge.

THE COURT: Apparently there are regular flights from Cleveland into Flint?

MR. ROTATORI: Yes, there are.

THE COURT: Mr. Haveland, I think you're stationed in Flint?

MR. HAVELAND: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: The tax attorney?

MR. FOREMAN: Washington, DC, your Honor, but there are also regular flights in from Washington.

THE COURT: All right, counsel, that's the schedule. Thursday the 16th, by the close of business — that's going to be 5:00 o'clock p.m. — inform the Court, or before that, certainly a day in advance of that would be even better, but no later than that. You'll have enough time to inquire further of Mr. Dandy, and to do whatever additional research or thinking you think may be appropriate on this, and we'll determine an appropriate course of action following that.

* * *

APPENDIX G

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
NORTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

-vs- No. 90-20054-FL

ALEX DANDY, VOLUME XVII
Defendant.
_____/

Proceedings had and testimony taken in the above-entitled matter before the Honorable Robert H. Cleland, United States District Judge, at Bay City, Michigan, on the 8th day of October, 1991.

APPEARANCES:
STEPHEN MARKMAN, U.S. ATTORNEY
BY: ROBERT HAVELAND, AUSA,
AND THEODORE FOREMAN, AUSA,
Appearing on behalf of the Government
ROBERT ROTATORI, ESQ., and
KENNETH LORD, ESQ.,
Appearing on behalf of the Defendant.

* * *

THE COURT: All right, counsel, the defendant has absented himself through consent, and we will have some time here to discuss Rule 29 motions. Mr. Rotatori, you may proceed from counsel table, if you wish.

MR. ROTATORI: Is it the Court's desire we address tax counts even though there hasn't been —

THE COURT: Here's how I — I think I made this clear at sidebar conference, although some of it may not have been recorded. It seems to me that the government's case is substantially concluded at least with respect to direct examination in the first instance on the summary witness. Therefore, all of the affirmative evidence the government would seek to present is in, and failing some kind of major retraction by the summary witness on cross examination, that's the only thing that remains now before the close of the government's case as Mr. Haveland has indicated.

It seems to me that you can — we can roll all of this together and take, even though it's just a moment or two in the history of this case premature, technically, I think we can take this as having been conducted at the close of government's proofs. And the government has no objection to that procedure, I take it?

MR. HAVELAND: Correct.

THE COURT: Let's proceed on that basis.

MR. ROTATORI: Okay, your Honor, with regard to Counts 1 and 2, I think we can take them together and save time because the argument for both are the same.

With regard to Counts 1 and 2, the defendant in support of its motion for a judgment of acquittal pursuant to Rule 29, incorporates by reference, the legal memorandum submitted to the Court when the defendant moved to dismiss Counts 1 and 2 based upon the statute of limitations.

THE COURT: So you have a statute of limitations issue which is — which we have roundly discussed, and I have denied.

And is there any additional basis found within the evidence here at trial or lack — asserted lack of evidence with regard to any points in that case?

MR. ROTATORI: Substantively we have no Rule 29 motion with regard to Counts 1 —

THE COURT: Procedurally you wish to reiterate your motion — I don't even know it's necessary to do that, but in an abundance —

MR. ROTATORI: Just briefly. At the time we made the motion prior to the trial, we did not have the testimony of, I think, the most critical witness with regard to the government's position that the statute of limitation was extended with regard to Counts 1 and 2 because of the allegation in the superseding indictment that the — one of the acts of evasion constituted the concealing and attempting to conceal from proper officers of the United States of America, the income due.

The counts — both Counts 1 and 2 allege that the evasion occurred from a particular date of filing of the return through November of 1985. I assume November of '85 is the magic date that brings them within the statute of limitations, primarily because of evidence concerning the defendant's preventing the Internal Revenue Service from obtaining the McDonald Dairy checks.

In that regard we now have the testimony of Mr. Cowan, and I suppose, your Honor, we could include at this point in time, the charge in the indictment — since it also refers to Mr. Cowan — that is Count 6, which is the obstruction of the IRS audit.

I think the statute of limitations argument in that obstruction of the IRS audit argument are interrelated. I believe it's clear that the testimony of the Jim Cowan was that

with regard to the November 1985 IRS summons, he went to see Alex Dandy, that he discussed the checks that were called for in the summons. Mr. Cowan indicated that Alex Dandy had a different position with regard to some of the checks than he did. That he left that meeting and he went back to Mr. Geoghan, and Mr. Cowan said he told Mr. Geoghan to turn them all over.

Mr. Geoghan's testimony, on the other hand, was that Cowan told him not turn them all over.

Whether or not Cowan told Geoghan to turn them over or not turn them over, I think, fails to establish any connection with the defendant. Cowan was clear that Dandy had a different position, that he decided to turn them over anyway. So I don't see how the evidence supports the obstruction of that summons in November of '85 as alleged in Count 6. There's no connection with the failure to turn over and Dandy. The only possible connection would have been Cowan, and Cowan testifies to the contrary.

So I think Rule 29 should be granted with regard to the obstruction count, Count 6. That being the case, then the government loses their underpinnings for extending the statute of limitations as we have argued before in Court and submitted memorandum. We feel Counts 1 and 2 should be dismissed under Rule 29 based upon the statute of limitations argument we have presented to the Court previously.

THE COURT: Okay. Let's take these in series, Mr. Haveland, a comment please from the government with respect to the testimony of Mr. Cowan, Mr. Geoghan and inferences that could be drawn legitimately by a finder of fact with regard to those things.

MR. HAVELAND: Very briefly, your Honor. It is my recollection of Mr. Cowan's testimony that both in January and again in November of 1985, as soon as

McDonald Dairy had been served with the IRS summons, Mr. Cowan met with Mr. Dandy, discussed the summons, asked Mr. Dandy what he should do and Mr. Dandy instructed him in no uncertain terms not to deliver the third party checks that had been pulled out by Ed Geoghan under Mr. Cowan's instructions. These are checks but for Mr. Dandy's directions, McDonald would have delivered to the IRS both in January and in November of 1985.

That in itself, in November of 1985 Mr. Dandy's instruction to Mr. Cowan not to deliver the third party checks, is all that is required to prove an attempt to continue the tax evasion scheme within the five year period — excuse me, six year period.

Now, it is true that Mr. Cowan was somewhat — his testimony was that he disregarded Mr. Dandy's advice in November of 1985 and instructed Mr. Geoghan to turn over all the checks. In fact, however, Mr. Geoghan testified to the contrary, that Mr. Cowan did not instruct him to do that, that Mr. Cowan instructed him to withhold certain checks. Both Mr. Geoghan and Mr. Draheim have testified that McDonald Dairy did not, in fact, turn over these third party checks.

You may recall that Mr. Geoghan testified he still had those checks segregated and he gave them to Agent Georgeff approximately three or four years later.

But regardless of all that, all that is required is an attempt by the defendant to evade taxes within a statutory period. The testimony of Mr. Cowan is unequivocal that Mr. Dandy told him not to give those third party checks.

THE COURT: My notes in this section of Mr. Cowan's testimony indicate that he stated to the effect: I felt pressured, he represented a lot of business to McDonald Dairy — speaking of Mr. Dandy — and when asked about the issue of the checks, whether to turn them over, whether to segregate

them, whether to take them as indicative of some unimportant and ancillary event as Mr. Dandy was apparently trying to construe them at that meeting, taking the evidence in the light most favorable to the government — which is, of course, the required standard here — the Court finds that a reasonable trier of fact could conclude from all of the evidence and inferences drawn from the evidence that the defendant, indeed, was attempting to deal with Mr. Cowan in a way that would have the effect, and intentionally so, of interfering with the audit. The motion with respect to Count 6 accordingly must fail.

And with the same finding, the Court determines again here that based upon evidence at trial, that there is a rational foundation for the statute of limitations challenge that's been raised by the defense. And with respect to Counts 1 and 2 then the motion additionally will be denied.

* * *

APPENDIX H

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

Nos. 92-1702 and 92-1840

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Plaintiff-Appellee,

v.

ALEX DANDY,
Defendant-Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Eastern District of Michigan,
Northern Division

BRIEF FOR THE UNITED STATES

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* * *

ARGUMENT

I. THE TRIAL JUDGE'S ACQUAINTANCE WITH ONE WITNESS DID NOT CREATE A REASONABLE QUESTION AS TO THE JUDGE'S IMPARTIALITY.

District Judge Robert H. Cleland informed the parties months before trial that he was acquainted with Douglas Mowat, the president of London's Farm Dairy, Inc., a

corporation mentioned in the indictment. (Hearing of Mary 14, 1991 at 3-5). He described his relationship as a "friendly acquaintance," and stated that Mowat had probably contributed $10 or $20 to his campaigns for state circuit court judge; he had not seen Mowat "in well over a couple of years now and certainly [had] not had any discussion with him over the facts of this case . . . [n]or do I think I have discussed his business with him at all." Id. The government had previously given defense counsel a transcript of Mowat's grand jury testimony in the case. Id. at 6.

Defendant filed a motion for disqualification of Judge Cleland. (R. 48). The motion was based solely on Section 455(a), which provides that "Any . . . judge . . . of the United States shall disqualify himself in any proceeding in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned." Judge Cleland denied the motion in a thorough written order. (R. 52: Order Denying Motion).

The legal standard to be applied to a recusal motion under section 455(a) is well-established in this Circuit:

> A district judge is required to recuse himself "only if a reasonable person with knowledge of all the facts would conclude that the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned." This standard is objective and is not based "on the subjective view of a party."

United States v. Nelson, 922 F.2d 311, 319 (6th Cir.), cert. denied, 111 S. Ct. 1635 (1991). Application of this standard requires a brief discussion of the facts.

The most important fact to be considered in the instant case is that it involved a jury trial, not a bench trial. The

credibility of witness Mowat was to be determined by the jury, not the trial judge. Indeed, the jury was never made aware of the witness' acquaintance with the judge, a fact that was utterly irrelevant to the trial. Second, there was no uncertainty about the nature or scope of Mowat's expected testimony, as defense counsel already had a copy of his grand jury testimony. Defendant advanced no unusual legal issue likely to arise during Mowat's testimony and none in fact did.

Finally, Mowat was neither a party in the case nor a victim of any of the crimes charged. (Defendant's contrary claim in his brief on appeal at 13-14 is simply not supported by the testimony he cites; that Mowat arguably was impeached does not mean that he was a victim).* The indictment charged that defendant defrauded the Chatham Supermarket chain by misappropriating kickbacks paid by its supplier, London's Farm Dairy. Mowat, the President of London's, was hardly a victim; he and his firm actually benefited from the increased business Dandy steered their way. The only entity defrauded was Chatham/Nu-Trax, which paid higher prices for dairy products because its Chairman, Dandy, demanded personal kickbacks instead of rebates for the corporation. Accordingly, there was no reason to believe that Judge Cleland's acquaintance with the witness would affect the case in any way.

Defendant cites no case in which recusal was ordered under circumstances even remotely similar to these. This

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* Moreover, even prior contact with the victim of a crime is not sufficient to require recusal of a judge. United States v. Cuyler, 584 F.2d 644 (3d Cir. 1978), cert. denied, 440 U.S. 925 (1979) (trial judge had known murder victim and attended his funeral); United States v. Story, 716 F.2d 1088, 1091 (6th Cir. 1983) (trial judge had previously represented the victim - VFW National Home - and had recommended it to clients as a charitable bequest).

court has recently affirmed decisions not to recuse in circumstances far more suspicious. For example, in Easley v. University of Michigan Board of Regents, 906 F.2d 1143 (6th Cir. 1990), cert. denied, 111 S. Ct. 1414 (1991), a bench trial was at issue. The trial judge was closely involved with the defendant University as an alumnus, a volunteer fund-raiser, a member of its Law School's committee of visitors, and a member of the athletics support club. Nevertheless, the Sixth Circuit held that "the amicable feelings Judge Feikens undoubtedly has for his alma mater, the University of Michigan, fail to demonstrate a sufficient basis for his recusal." The court's judgment for the school was affirmed.

Detroit Mayor Coleman Young has been the subject of at least two motions to recuse trial judges. In Baker v. City of Detroit, 458 F.Supp. 374 (E.D. Mich. 1978), plaintiffs moved to disqualify then-District Judge Damon Keith due to his close friendship with the mayor; the motion was denied. On the other hand, In Re City of Detroit, 828 F.2d 1160 (6th Cir. 1987), overruled (on mandamus issue only), In Re Aetna Casualty and Surety Co., 919 F.2d 1136 (6th Cir. 1990), involved a motion by the City to recuse Judge Feikens, whom it accused of bias and prejudice against Major Young and other city officials. This court held that the City's appeal of Judge Feikens' refusal to recuse himself was not cognizable by way of a writ of mandamus; in an alternative holding, however, it ruled that the record revealed neither actual bias nor the appearance of partiality, despite the fact that Judge Feikens had been severely criticized by other judges and the media for his published comments concerning Major Young and his administration of the City departments at issue (water and sewage). Both these cases, too, involved bench trials; yet recusal was still not required.

This court discussed the issue most recently in United States v. Hurst, 951 F.2d 1490 (6th Cir. 1991), cert. denied, 112 S. Ct. 1952 (1992). In that case the trial judge, while a private attorney years earlier, had filed a lawsuit against

defendant Burnett on behalf of a group of investors alleging fraud. Burnett's motion for recusal pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §455(a) was denied, and this court affirmed: "We are satisfied that a reasonable person would consider the trial judge to be impartial in this matter and find no prejudice toward defendant Burnett." 951 F.2d at 1503.

The merits of defendant's pretrial motion must be determined, of course, on the basis of the record as it existed at the time the court ruled, nearly four months before trial began. On appeal, however, defendant attempts to buttress that motion by arguing that Judge Cleland imposed an "extraordinarily harsh" sentence in order to vindicate his friend Mowat. That sentence, however, was fully justified by the record evidence of the ten felonies Dandy committed, and the tens of millions of dollars in losses he imposed on hundreds of employees and other creditors of two major bankrupt supermarket chains. Far from being harsh, the sentence imposed likely will lead to Dandy's release on parole after serving only 1/3 of his sentence (92) months) — considerably less than the guideline range established by the U.S. Sentencing Commission for such crimes committed after November 1, 1987 (108-135 months). (R. 144: Supplement to Government's Sentencing Memorandum). Any reasonably objective observer would conclude that this sentence reflected the nature and circumstances of Dandy's crimes and his prior criminal record, rather than the trial judge's slight familiarity with one witness whom he had not seen for years.

To discourage forum-shopping, a trial judge must hear cases unless some reasonable factual basis to doubt his or her impartiality or fairness is shown by probative evidence. Blizard v. Frechette, 601 F.2d 1217, 1221 (1st Cir. 1979). Here, the trial judge's mere "friendly acquaintance" with one of the government's 56 witnesses at a ten-week long jury trial did not create a reasonable question as to the judge's impartiality. Accordingly, defendant's motion to disqualify Judge Cleland was properly denied.